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VOLUME 50—NO. 9
HICKMAN, FULTON COUNTY, KENTUCKY, THURSDAY, JULY 16, 1908.
WHOLE NO. 2404
ESTABLISHED IN THE YEAR 1859

The Story of The Sinking of Reelfoot Lake

How the Awful Antics of Nature in 1811 Horrified Early Settlers, and Its Final Consummation, Told by an Eye-Witness



The Lake as it Appears To-day, the Most Unique of all Lakes.
Remains of a Virgin Forest Are Still Visible.

Twelve miles from Hickman is probably the most interesting body of water in existence. It is interesting both from a standpoint of origin and its appearance today. There is not another like it.

The following letter, written in 1836, to the Rev. Lorenzo Dow, graphically describing the horrible earthquake of 1811 and the consequent sinking of Reelfoot Lake, known the country over for its superiority as a fishing and hunting resort, was recently found among some old letters. As will be seen in those days it took weeks and oftentimes months to receive a letter after being mailed. The article will be especially interesting now, because of the recent decision of the lower courts of West Tennessee denying certain parties, who claimed to have purchased the Lake, the right to drain Reelfoot Lake and convert the soil underneath into farms. The letter is as follows:

"Dear Brother: I have just received your kind letter, written some three or four weeks ago, requesting me to give you a description

before. The people fled hither and yon, supposing that there was less danger at a distance from the river, which was boiling, foaming and rearing terrifically. Men, women and children gave up in despair, some praying and others fainting, so great was their fear.

"There were light shocks each day until January 23, 1812, when one as hard as the first occurred, followed by the same phenomena. From this time until February 4 the earth was in continual agitation, visibly waving as a gentle sea. That day a shock, almost as severe as the others, that it was called 'the hard shock.' The earth was transformed into total darkness and the chickens went back to roost, the cows moored and the frightened horses pitifully neighed. At first the Mississippi river seemed to recede from its banks, and its waters, gathering up like a mountain, leaving for a short period of time many boats which were passing down the river, on the bottom of the river during which time the crews escaped to land in safety. The river rose 10 to 15 feet perpendicularly, expanding, as it were, at the same time the banks were overflowed with a retrograde current. The river falling immediately, receded within its banks again with such violence that it took with it whole groves of young cottonwood trees and much cattle and stock.

"A great many fish were left on the banks, being unable to keep up with the water, and an old canoe, antique in construction, was washed ashore. The river was a mass of floating wrecks of boats, and it is said that one was wrecked in which there was a lady and six children, all of whom were lost.

"In the hard shocks described the earth was horrible lacerated—the surface was from time to time covered over of uneven depths by the sand which issued from the fissures,

There were two the past winter, which were made in great numbers all over the country, some of which closed up immediately after they had vomited forth their sand and water. In many places, however, there was a substance resembling coal thrown up with the sand. It is impossible to say what the depth of the fissures or irregular breaks were. The site of New Madrid, Missouri, was settled down at least 15 feet, and not more than half a mile below that town there does not appear to be any alteration of the river, but back from the river a short distance the numerous large ponds or lakes, which covered a greater part of the country, were totally dried up. The beds of some of them bulge above their former banks several feet.

"The most remarkable feature of all the entire disturbances which was not generally known for some months afterwards was the discovery of a huge lake on the Tennessee side of the Mississippi, upward of 35 miles long and from one-half to eight miles in width. This lake was later called Reelfoot Lake. There are places in it the bottom of which has never been found, though many efforts have been made to ascertain the depth of these places.

"The lake has communication with the Mississippi river at both ends, and it is conjectured that it will not be many years before the principal part, if not the whole, of the Mississippi will pass that way. In the last year or so an herb, resembling moss, has literally covered the surface of the lake, and during the winter months wild fowls, such as ducks, geese, cranes, etc., winter on the lake and eat this moss as food. Deer and other animals seem to enjoy it.

"It is said that where the lake was formed was a vast area of fine timbered lands, and in place only



Walnut Log Hotel—In Keeping With its Rustic Surroundings.
The Only Hostelry on This End of the Lake.

the tops of the trees can be seen. The lake runs north and south, and each end has a neck shape, widening out about the center, or nearer the northern terminus than the center. The water in it does not seem to rise or lower to any marked degree, and the lake is destined to become the great hunting and fishing resort of the West.

"It is said that where this lake was formed was formerly the Indians' hunting grounds and also where they held their annual war dances; but since the terrible visitation of the earthquake it is a rare thing that one ventures in that vicinity. By some method, known only to themselves, they marked a warning on the trees for other Indians to keep away.

"Most of those who fled from the vicinity during the hard shocks have returned, but always become greatly alarmed at the slightest trembling of the earth. We have since their commencement, in 1811, and occasionally, feel light shocks. Hardly a week passes but we feel one.

much more severe than we have felt them for several years before. Since then, however, they are lighter than ever, and as the months and years pass the inhabitants are becoming more reconciled to the surroundings.

"One circumstance worthy of mention is: This section was once subject to severe thunder, but for a long time previous to the first shocks there was no thunder at all and but very little since.

"I have now complied with your request for a description of the earthquake—imperfect, it is true, but just as it occurred to the best of my memory. If you will come out here, you and myself will take a two or three days' tour of inspection of the county most affected by the earthquakes, and especially of the lake I have described in the foregoing. Doubtless it has not a parallel in history, and in my mind is the wonder of the age.

"Respectfully yours,
"E. BRYAN.
"New Madrid, Missouri."

If You Don't Object to Saving Money Attend Smith & Amberg's

Big Mid-Season Clearing Sale

.....PRICES CRACKED ON EVERYTHING.....

Delinquent Tax List 1907	
Returned by Tom Dillon, Jr., City Marshal, July 6, 1908:	
(WHITE)	
Allison D E non res.	\$1 50
Adams J Q non res.	1 50
Adams Pat non res.	1 50
Acox M F non res.	1 50
Allison J M	1 50
Arnold W H	1 50
Anderson W S	1 50
Anderson J H	1 50
Adair J R	1 50
Alexander B C non res.	1 50
Alford G W non res.	1 50
Allison	1 50
Brasham Jeff	1 50
Brown Clarence	1 50
Beckwith Wm non res.	1 50
Bradhurst John	1 50
Bradberry John non res.	1 50
Bell J	1 50
Brumfield G M	1 50
Bell J non res.	1 50
Colby James non res.	1 50
Calderon R O	1 50
Colby W L	1 50
Chambers A non res.	1 50
Chambers Chas.	1 50
Darham B C	1 50
Duncan T	1 50
Derphrey W L	1 50
Dubin James	1 50
Dubin James non res.	1 50
Dubin J G	1 50
Eaker W A non res.	1 50
Faulkner Will	1 50
Faulkner J B	1 50
Gray Arthur non res.	1 50
Gardner Bob	1 50
Graves J W	1 50
Grigsby E G	1 50
Grisson W E	1 50
Holland Monroe non res.	1 50
Haynes S W non res.	1 50
Hale John	1 50
Higgins Wm	1 50
Holcombe Harry	1 50
Haskins J W non res.	1 50
Halford J W non res.	1 50
Harris D D	1 50
Haynes Lon	1 50
Hill W E	1 50
Hart Tom	1 50
Inman E L non res.	1 50
Johnson W T	1 50
Jordan George	1 50
Johnson W M	1 50
Johnson G W	1 50
Johnson E W	1 50
Johnson W E	1 50
Jones J C	1 50
Kirby James non res.	1 50
Kirk T W non res.	1 50
King E L non res.	1 50
King D C	1 50
King J W D	1 50
Kelly L M non res.	8 13
Knaeble J M non res.	1 50
Lee Harry non res.	1 50
McClure H E	1 50
Morris Pleas	1 50
Minch J A non res.	1 50
McMurry James non res.	1 50
Mullins G H	1 50
Malone Jerry non res.	26 50
Moore E B	1 50
Mathis B F	1 50
McCuan H E	1 50
Moore A B	1 50
Mooney Counts non res.	1 50
Moore J M	1 50
Naylor Eugene non res.	1 50
Newton H E	1 50
Neugent J S	1 50
Neugent A T	1 50
Odell L M	1 50
Overtou J B non res.	1 50
Owens W E	1 50
Parker S B non res.	1 50
Powell W E non res.	1 50
Puckett J	1 50
Roper R D non res.	1 50
Rudd C T	1 50
Roberts T G	1 50
Ray John E	1 50
Reid Joe	1 50
Roberts R E	1 50
Ragsdale W D	1 50
Robinson A G	2 44
Somers James	1 50
Salmon Robert	1 50
Scarce A J	1 50
Shelton Henry non res.	1 50
Smith L N	3 50
Taylor B C non res.	1 50
Taylor J H	1 50
Taylor W D	1 50
Taylor A M	1 50
Thompson Ed	1 50
Turner & Salmon	1 88
Turner G R	1 50
Walker G B	1 50
Webb J H	1 50



THOMAS TAGGART
In the limelight of National Democracy just now.

Cures Chills and Fever.

G. W. Wirt, Nacogdoches, Texas, says: "His daughter had chills and fever for three years; he could not find anything that would help her till he used Herbine. His wife will not keep house without it, and cannot say too much for it." Price 50c. Sold by Cowgill's Drug Store, Inc., and Helms & Kilgus.

Wright G S	1 50	King Jeff	1 50
Williams J W	1 50	Lucas A J	1 50
Woodward H E	1 50	Lowry Sidney	1 50
West O D	1 50	McGhee Jim	1 50
White Martin	1 50	Martin Allen	1 50
White B S	1 50	Martin Jack	2 75
COLORED			
Anderson Joe non res.	1 50	Mosely Prince non res.	1 50
Alge Hays	1 50	Merriwether Robert	1 50
Brown Tom	1 50	Merriwether Lem	1 50
Brown Dick	1 50	McCollum Will	1 50
Bagsby Bob non res.	1 50	Maddox Arthur	1 50
Brown Henry	1 50	McGhee Lonnie	1 50
Baalam Sam	1 50	McGhee Louis	1 50
Boyd Jack	1 50	Mitchell John non res.	1 50
Carter Bonnett	dead	Nailing B B Sr non res.	1 50
No name on tax book	2 44	Nailing B B Jr non res.	1 50
Coleman Milton	1 50	Parker Manuel	1 50
Cox Jim	1 50	Rice Dan	1 50
Carr Will	1 50	Shofner Arthur	1 50
Cawthen Perry	1 50	Simmons Albert non res.	1 50
Crossland J R	1 50	Stephens Silas	1 50
Clark Nelson	1 50	Stephens Roger	1 50
Doyle John	1 50	Smith Mort	1 50
Durrett O	1 50	Smith R S	1 50
Enoch Harry	1 50	Talley Doc	1 50
Forrest Chas	1 50	Towers Mose non res.	1 50
Freeman Bob	1 50	Taylor Ed	1 50
Franklin J M	1 50	Thomas Bell	1 50
Ferrell Sam	1 50	Thompson Sam	1 50
Fuqua Albert	1 50	Thompson Will	1 50
George Ed	1 50	Walker George	1 50
Gardner Richard	1 50	Williams Remus	1 50
Hall Doc	1 50	Williams Henry	1 50
Ingram W W	1 50	Winston Jude	1 50
Jackson Will	1 50	Wright Wallace	1 50
Jones Ed	1 50	Winstons Elgin	1 50
Jones Dave	1 50	Wiley James	1 50
Keys Christie	1 50	Wiley Coleman	1 50
		Wynn & Martin	21 25